

Lev 14-1 to 15-33 Torah Reading (Parshat Metzora)
English version to be sung to the Torah tropes by Len Fellman
Latest version April 26, 2020

14:1 Then spoke YHWH to Moses, saying,
2 This shall be the instruction for the *metzora* (the one with the *tzara'ath*, i.e. skin blanch or scale disease), on the day of his purification.
He is to be brought to the priest.
3 [He shall go forth]—the priest—[going outside] the camp.
[The person will be seen] by the priest, [who may then observe] that healed is the affliction of *tzara'ath* on the *metzora*.
4 [He will then order]—the priest—[that there must be taken] [for the one being cleansed] two birds—live ones, and clean,
and wood of cedar, wool of scarlet or crimson, and hyssop.
5 By order of the priest will be slaughtered a bird—[one of the two], in a bowl made of clay over *mayim chayim* (living or fresh waters).
6 [As for the bird] still alive—he [must take it] with [the wood of cedar] and the wool colored scarlet, and the hyssop,
and proceed to dip them, [these together with] the bird—[the one still alive] in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the *mayim chayim*.
7 [All this he will sprinkle] [over the person] [who is being cleansed] from the *tzara'ath*, [doing it] [seven times],
thus making him clean. [And he shall send] the bird that is still alive, out into the open field.
8 [The person must wash]—the one being cleansed—scrub his clothing [and shave off] [all of his hair],
[and bathe himself] in water, [and thus be clean], [after which] he will return to the camp. [But he will remain] [outside of his tent] for seven days.
9 [And it will be] on the seventh day, [he must shave off] [all of his hair] from his head and his beard, and the brows of his eyes:
[all of his hair] he will shave, and wash [all of his clothes], [and proceed then to bathe] [all of his body] in water, [whence he is clean].
10 Then [on the eighth day] [he shall take] [two male lambs] [without blemish], [and another lamb]—[one ewe lamb] [in its first year],
[without blemish], together [with three-tenths of an ephah] of flour [as a meal offering] mixed with oil, plus one log (ten ounces) of oil.
11 [They shall be made to stand] [by the priest] [who is cleansing him]—[stationing both] the man being cleansed, [and his offerings]
before YHWH at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.
12 Then will take the priest a lamb—[one of the males]—[and present it], [bringing it forth] [as a guilt-offering] (*asham*), and the log of oil
and proceed [to lift them up] [end aliyah] [as a wave offering] before YHWH.

14:13 Then [he shall slaughter the lamb] [in the very same place] at which [there have been slaughtered] [offerings for sin] (*et ha chattat*) [and burnt-offerings also]—a place that is holy.
 [This is because of the fact] [that just *like* the *chattat*], the *asham* is [to the priest]. Holy of holies it is.
 14 [Next he will take]—[the priest must take] [some of the blood] [from the *asham*],
 [it will be placed] by the priest—[on the lobe] of the ear of the one being cleansed—[the right ear],
 and on the thumb of his hand—[the right thumb], and on the big toe of his foot—the right one.
 15 Then will take the priest [some of the log] of oil, [and pour it out] into the palm of his own hand—[the left hand].
 16 Then will dip] the priest his finger—[his right forefinger]—[into the oil] [that is in the palm] [of his left hand],
 and sprinkle [some of the oil] [with his finger] seven times, before YHWH.
 17 [Some of the remaining oil that is] [still in his palm]
 [must be placed] by the priest [on the lobe] of the ear [of the person being cleansed]—[the right ear],
 and on the thumb of his hand—[the right thumb], and on the big toe of his foot—the right one, [along with] the blood of the *asham*.
 18 [And what remains] of the oil, [still in] the palm of the *cohen*, [he must place] on the head [of the one being cleansed].
 [Thus atonement is made] [over him] by the priest before YHWH.
 19 Then will perform the priest the sacrifice for sin (the *chattat*), [making atonement] [over the one to be purified] from his defilement.
 [After that], he will slay the burnt-offering (the *olah*).
 20 [He will then place it]—[the priest will present] the burnt offering and the meal offering on the altar.
 [Having made] [atonement for him] [end aliyah] by the priest, he will be clean.
 21 But if [he should be poor], and [if his hand] [does not reach] (*i.e.* he can't afford it),
 [he must then take] [one male sheep] [as an offering for guilt]—[a wave offering], to atone for him,
 and a tenth measure of flour, a measure that is [mixed with oil] [as a grain offering], and a log of oil.
 22 Plus two [turtle doves] or two young [pigeons] as far as reaches his hand (*i.e.* what he can afford),
 the one shall be for a *chattat*, the other one for an *olah*.

14:23 He will present them [on the day] [that is day number eight] of his purification, to the priest,
to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, before YHWH.

24 [Then he will take]—[the priest must pick up] the lamb of *asham*, and the log of oil,
[and lift them up]—[they must be raised up] [by the *cohen*] [as a wave offering] before YHWH.

25 [He must then slaughter] the lamb of *asham*. [Then must take] the priest [some of the blood] of *asham* [and place it u[on] the earlobe
of the one being cleansed—[the right ear], and on the thumb of his hand—[the right thumb], and on the big toe of his foot—[the right foot].

26 [Some of the oil] [must be poured] by the priest into the palm of his own hand—[his left hand].

27 [Then must sprinkle] the priest with the finger [of his right hand] [some of the oil] [that is on the palm] [of his left hand],
seven times, before YHWH.

28 [Then must place the priest] [a portion of the oil] | that is [still in his palm] [on the earlobe] of the one being cleansed—[the right ear],
on the thumb of his hand—[the right thumb], and on the big toe of his foot—[the right foot], [over the place] of the blood of the *asham*.

29 [And what remains] of the oil, [still in] the palm of the *cohen*, [he must place] on the head [of the one being cleansed].
making atonement over him, before YHWH.

30 [He must prepare] one [of the turtle doves], or one [of the young pigeons] from what his hand can reach (*i.e.* what he can afford).

31 From [that which he could reach] [with his hand] (*i.e.* what he could afford), [offering one bird] [as a *chattat*] and the other one as an *olah*,
[along with the grain offering]. [Thus will atonement] [be made by the priest] over the one being cleansed, before YHWH.

32 This is the teaching [for him who has] the affliction of *tzara'ath*
[for one of whom] [end aliyah] his hand cannot attain [more for his purification].

33 Then spoke YHWH to Moses and to Aaron, as follows:

34 When you come into the land of *Canaan*, [the land which] [I Myself] am giving to you, as an inheritance,
[if I shall put] the affliction of *tzara'ath* in a house, in the land of your possession,

35 [then must come] the one [whose house it is], and tell the priest, [saying this]:

“[Something like an affliction] has appeared to me, in the house.”

14:36 Then will order the priest [to have emptied] [out the house] before there enters the priest to inspect the affliction,
 so that there is nothing unclean still in the house. After [this is done], the priest will come to see the house.
 37 He shall [see the affliction]. [If he observes] that the affliction is in the walls of the house,
 [as ingrained streaks] that are greenish or [reddish in color], and their appearance is deeper, than the wall,
 38 [Then he shall go out]—[the priest must come out] of the house, to the entrance of the house, and quarantine the house for seven days.
 39 And will come back the priest, on [the seventh day], [and examine it]. [If he observes] that the affliction has spread, in the walls of the house,
 40 then will order the priest [that they pull out] those stones having in them the affliction,
 [and have them] thrown outside the city, in a place that is unclean.
 41 [And the house itself] he shall have scraped on the inside, all around,
 [and they shall throw out] [the dried mud] that they [scraped off], outside the city, to a place that is unclean.
 42 [They will then take] some other stones [and bring them] in place [of the first stones],
 [and some earth]—[some other mud]—[they must take], and re-plaster the house.
 43 [If there returns] the affliction—it breaks out in the house, after removing the stones
 [and after the work] of scraping the house, and after re-plastering,
 44 [then must come] the priest [and examine it]. [If he should observe] a spread of the affliction in the house,
 then *tzará'ath* [of a malignant] [type it is] in the house. It is unclean.
 45 [Then they must] [demolish the house]: its stones and its wood, [as well as all] [the dried mud] in the house,
 [and take it] outside the city to a place unclean.
 46 [Anyone entering] the house [all the days] [one has quarantined] it will be unclean until evening.
 47 Anyone lying [in the house] must scrub his clothing. Anyone eating [in the house] must scrub his clothing.
 48 But if he in fact comes—[the priest does return]—and he looks, [and if he should observe] no spread of the affliction [in the house]
 after re-plastering the house, [then declared clean] by the priest [will be the house], since healed is the affliction.
 49 [And he shall take], to purify the house, any two birds and wood of cedar, some crimson wool, and hyssop.
 50 He will slaughter a bird—[one of the two]—[into an earthen vessel], over *mayim chayim* (fresh spring water).

14:51 [He shall then take] [the piece of wood made of cedar], [along with the hyssop], [and together with] | the wool [of crimson or scarlet],
[and he must take] the bird [that is still alive], [and [dip all of them] in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered, [and in the *mayim*] *chayim*,
and sprinkle it on the house, seven times.

52 [And he shall purge] the house with the blood of the bird, [and with the *mayim*] *chayim*,
[and with the bird] [that is still alive], [and with] [the wood of cedar], [with the hyssop], [and the crimson wool].

53 [And he shall send out] [the bird that he used]—[the one still alive]—[outside the city], into [the open field],
[end aliyah] to atone for the house, [making it clean].

54 This is the instruction (*torah*) for all afflictions of *tzara'ath*, and for *nethek* (scab or scurf),

55 and for *tzara'ath* in clothing, or in a house,

56 for inflammation and for scabs, [and for shiny spots],

57 [to provide the laws] as to the day one is unclean, and the day [one is clean]. This is the law of *tzara'ath*.

15:1 Then spoke YHWH to Moses and to Aaron, as follows:

2 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them,

“For a man—[for any man] to whom there is a discharge from his member, [then from his flow], he is unclean (*tamei*).

3 [And this is what] shall be his uncleanness (*tum'ah*) in his flow:

If running [is his member] [with its flow] [or stopped up] is his member [with its flow]—his *tum'ah* it is.

4 [And any bed] on which [there lies] [upon it] the man with the flow is unclean, [and any object] of which he sits upon it is unclean.

5 [For any person] who should touch his bedding—[that one must wash] [his or her clothes] and bathe in water, remaining unclean until evening.

6 [And one who sits] on an object of which there sat on it [the man with flow],

[that one must wash] [his or her clothes] and bathe in water, remaining unclean until evening.

7 [And one who touches] the flesh [of the man with flow],

[that one must wash] [his or her clothes] and bathe in water, remaining unclean until evening.

8 If he should spit—a man with flow—[on a clean person],

[that one must wash] [his or her clothes] and bathe in water, remaining unclean until evening.

15:9 [Any riding seat] of which there [had ridden upon it] [the man with flow], is unclean.

10 [Any person who touches] anything [that had been] [under him] is unclean until evening.

[One who carries] [these things]—[that one must wash] [his or her clothes] and bathe in water, remaining unclean until evening.

11 Anyone [who is] touched [by the man with flow], if his hands had not been rinsed with water, [that one must wash] [his or her clothes] and bathe in water, remaining unclean until evening.

12 [Any vessel of clay] which had been touched by the man with flow [must be broken]; [but if the vessel is made of wood] it shall be rinsed with water.

13 [When he becomes clean]—[the man with flow]—[from his discharge], he must count for himself a [full seven days] for his cleansing, and launder his clothing. [And he must bathe]—[immersing his body]—in *mayim chayim*, and he is clean.

14 And [on the eighth day] [he must take for himself] two [turtle doves] or two young pigeons, [and he must come] | before YHWH at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, [and give them] to the priest.

15 Prepared [they will be] [by the priest]—one as a *chattat* and one as an *olah* (a burnt offering), thus atonement [is made for him] [by the *cohen*] [end aliyah] before YHWH from his discharge.

16 [Now a man]—when there goes out from him [a discharge of seed], [he must bathe] [himself in water]—[all of his flesh], and remains unclean until evening.

17 Any clothing and any leather of which, upon it, [there is discharge of seed], shall be scrubbed in water, and remain unclean until evening.

18 [And a woman] [of whom there] [should lie a man] [with her], [and there is a discharge of seed], they must bathe with water. They are unclean until evening.

19 When a woman shall have a discharge: [there is blood] [that emerges as a flow] from her body—for seven days she shall be [in her separation]. Anyone who touches her is unclean until evening.

20 Anything of which she lies [upon it] during her separation becomes unclean. [And anything] of which she sits upon it is unclean.

21 [Anyone who touches] her bed—[that person must scrub] [his or her clothing], also bathe in water, and is unclean until evening.

15:22[Anyone who touches] any object [of which she sat] upon it—
 [that person must scrub] [his or her clothing], also bathe in water, and is unclean until evening.

23 Thus if on the bed [he should be], [or if he should be] [on any object]
 of which she sat upon it [when he touches it], he is unclean until evening.

24[And if it happens that] [there should lie]—there lies a man [with the woman], [so that her] *niddah* [state of separation] [is upon him],
 he is unclean for seven days. [And any bed] of which he lies upon it, shall be unclean.

25[Now as concerns a woman] [of whom there shall flow] a discharge of blood for [a number of days] and it is not [the time of her *niddah*],
 or if it flows right after her *niddah*, [all of the days] the flow [of her *tum'ah*] [shall be like the days] [of her *niddah*]. Unclean she shall be.

26[Any bed] [of which she lies] [upon it] all the days of her flow like the bed of her *niddah*, [it shall be for her].
 Any object of which she lies [upon it]—unclean it shall be, like the *tum'ah* of her separation.

27 Whoever touches them becomes unclean. [The person must scrub] [his or her clothing], also bathe in water, and is unclean until evening.

28 When she is purified from her flow, [she shall count off] [for herself] [end aliyah] seven days, after which she is clean.

29 Then [on the eighth day] [she will take for herself] two [turtle doves] or two young pigeons
 [and she must] [bring them] to the priest at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

30 Then shall make the priest [of one of them] [a *chattat*] [and of the other one] an *olah*;
 [thus atonement] [is made over her], by the priest before YHWH. [From her flow] she is cleansed.

31 Thus you will separate *B'nei Yisrael* from their *tum'ah*,
 [that they should not] die through their impurity when they defile my tabernacle that stands in their midst.”

32 This is the teaching (*torah*) concerning the *zav*—[one with a flow];
 for one [of whom] [there does emerge] [a discharge of seed], [becoming *tam'ei* thereby];

33 [and for a woman infirm] [in her state of separation], [and for a person with a flow] or a discharge—either a man or a woman—
 [and for a man] [end aliyah] that lies with a woman who is unclean.

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh or yetiv kadma or pashta geresh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, geresh, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh (<i>or</i> : azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
⏟Renew our days⏟	⏟She weeps bitterly⏟	⏟a fire-offering to God⏟

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalsholet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “*God*” or “*Adonai*”.

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
 Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)
 Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)
 The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)
 JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)
 Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)
 Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series
 Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
 The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
 The New King James Bible (1982)